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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

HISTORY

I

This sarcophagus contained the body  
Of Uresh-Nai, priestess to the goddess Mut,  
Mother of All—  
.....

II

The priestess has passed into her tomb.  
The stone has taken up her spirit!  
Granite over flesh: who will deny  
Its advantages?  
  
Your death?—water  
Spilled upon the ground—  
Though water will mount again into rose-leaves—  
But you?—would hold life still,  
Even as a memory, when it is over.  
Benevolence is rare.  
  
Climb about this sarcophagus, read  
What is writ for you in these figures,  
Hard as the granite that has held them  
With so soft a hand the while  
Your own flesh has been fifty times  
Through the guts of oxen—read!  
  
“The rose-tree will have its donor  
Even though he give stingily.

## *History*

The gift of some endures  
Ten years, the gift of some twenty,  
And the gift of some for the time a  
Great house rots and is torn down.  
Some give for a thousand years to men of  
One country, some for a thousand  
To all men, and some few to all men  
While granite holds an edge against  
The weather.

“Judge then of love!”

### III

“My flesh is turned to stone. I  
Have endured my summer. The flurry  
Of falling petals is ended. I was  
Well desired and fully caressed  
By many lovers, but my flesh  
Withered swiftly and my heart was  
Never satisfied. Lay your hands  
Upon the granite as a lover lays his  
Hand upon the thigh and upon the  
Round breasts of her who is  
Beside him; for now I will not wither,  
Now I have thrown off secrecy, now  
I have walked naked into the street,  
Now I have scattered my heavy beauty  
In the open market.

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

"Here I am with head high and a  
Burning heart eagerly awaiting  
Your caresses, whoever it may be,  
For granite is not harder than  
My love is open, runs loose among you!

"I arrogant against death! I  
Who have endured! I worn against  
The years!"

SMELL!

O strong-ridged and deeply hollowed  
Nose of mine!—what will you not be smelling?  
What tactless asses we are, you and I, bony nose,  
Always indiscriminate, always unashamed!  
And now it is the souring flowers of the bedraggled  
Poplars—a festering pulp on the wet earth  
Beneath them—with what deep a thirst  
We quicken our desires, O nose of mine,  
To that rank odor of a passing springtime!  
Can you not be decent? Can you not reserve your ardors  
For something less unlovely? What girl will care  
For us, do you think, if we continue in these ways?  
Must you taste everything? Must you know everything?  
Must you have a part in everything?

*William Carlos Williams*

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